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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to assess the status and desirability of articulation activities between community colleges and secondary schools in a southern state as perceived by school and college administrators. The study also sought to determine whether there were significant differences in the college and high school administrators' perceptions with respect to geographic location, size of the community college, and the residential status of the community college. A questionnaire was developed and sent to 83 selected administrators at all of the colleges and to a random sample of 140 principals of representative public secondary schools from each of the community college service areas within the state. Study findings, based on responses from 58 (64%) of the community college administrators and 83 (59%) of the secondary administrators, included the following: (1) articulation activities found to be prevalent throughout the state included programs allowing high school students to visit community college classes, policies clearly indicating differences between high school and college-level classes, and the use of college faculty members as guest lecturers, consultants, and resource persons at the high school; (2) survey respondents generally agreed that articulation activities should be encouraged to a greater extent; that high schools were doing a good job in preparing students to succeed in community college general education and vocational programs; and that articulation benefits both institutions; and (3) community college administrators perceived articulation to be more desirable and to be occurring to a greater extent than did high school administrators. The survey instrument is appended. (WJT)

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The Status of Articulation Between Public Secondary Schools and Public Community Colleges

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Abstract

The status of articulation between public schools and public community colleges within the boundaries of a state was measured by a Likert type survey of responses of 58 community college and 83 high school administrators. Perceptions were examined relative to: (1) the type of institution, (2) the geographical location, (3) size of the community college, and (4) the residential status of the college.

Results indicated that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of community college administrators and secondary school administrators regarding: (1) the status of articulation, (2) the desirability of articulation, and (3) the status of articulation as it relates to general education curricular areas. The community college administrators were significantly more favorable toward articulation activities and perceived that there were more activities going on than did their colleagues in the high schools.

The Status of Articulation Between
Public Secondary Schools and Public Community Colleges

With the growing concern of taxpayers regarding the manner in which their tax dollars are spent, public educational institutions are pressured to become more accountable and more responsible in providing educational opportunities to the general public [Cross, 1]. Recent economic trends have also placed additional burdens on educational institutions. In many instances, the percentage of state revenues allocated to community colleges has declined, so theseinstitutions receive smaller proportions of the total available revenue with which to operate.

Further, with the publication of A Nation At Risk [2] and subsequent reports of similar focus, many of the problems associated with the American educational system were identified, and the suggestion was made that major educational reform needs to occur if our nation is to survive. The ensuing educational reform movement has concentrated on efforts to improve faculty, the achievement level of students, the facilities, and the curriculum [Cross, 1].

Educational reform must include improvements not only within individual segments of our educational system but between and among them, too. Accordingly, renewed attention must be given to the development and improvement

of articulation agreements designed to facilitate the progression of students throughout the various levels of school and collegiate work.

Articulation efforts should include gathering information about and perceptions of public school and community college personnel concerning the status of such activities as cooperation, recruiting, and curriculum planning, as well as other matters of interest to their respective institutions.

Kintzer [3] defined articulation as a comprehensive process, which . . . "involves the interrelationships between schools and colleges, quasi-educational institutions, and other community organizations--all activities that effect the movement of students" (p. 3). Kintzer also emphasized the need for shared responsibility among the educational units, which fosters the continuous flow of students from one level to another.

The sharing of physical and human resources could result in increased efficiency and cost savings for the educational institutions involved. Further, the cooperative efforts could serve as a public relations tool, demonstrating an example of efficiency in the use of the taxpayer's money.

The purpose of this study was to assess the status and desirability of articulation activities that exist

between the community colleges and secondary schools in a southern state as measured by the perceptions of administrators in the two types of institutions. Additionally, the study sought to determine if there were significant differences in perceptions of the two groups of administrators with respect to their geographic location within the state, the size of the community college as measured by full time equivalent enrollment, and the residential status of the community college.

Method

An instrument developed by Edwards, Leonard, and Southerland [4] was used to measure articulation. This questionnaire was researched to establish construct validity to measure both status (items 1-26) and desirability of articulation (items 27-29) as shown in Table 1. It contains 18 basic items with a total of 29 responses. A subscale from the status construct was created using those items pertaining only to status of articulation for general education (items 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6a, 10a, and 11).

Place Table 1 about here

Enrollment was measured in terms of full-time

equivalent students. For the independent variable of size, institutions with less than 1,500 students were considered small, while community colleges having enrollments of 1,500 or more students were considered large.

The survey was sent to selected administrators at all the community colleges and community college campuses as well as to a random sample of the principals of representative public secondary schools from each of the community college service areas within the state. A minimum of one secondary school from each community college district was asked to participate in the study. Community college administrators involved in this study were: (a) the president of each institution, (b) the vice-president and/or academic dean for each campus, and (c) the dean of student services from each campus. Thus, the questionnaire ultimately was mailed to 58 administrative personnel from community colleges and 140 secondary school principals.

Multiple regression was used to analyze the data pertaining to the purposes of the study.

Results and Discussion

Of the 58 community college administrators surveyed, 37 (64%) responded. From the secondary administrators, 83 questionnaires were received for a response rate of 59%.

The breakdown of respondents with respect to the

independent variables of type of institution, geographical location in the state, enrollment of the community college, and residence status appears in Table 2. Most of the colleges, 66.7%, were large. Dormitory facilities were provided for students on the campus at 83.3% of the colleges.

Place Table 2 about here

The mean and standard deviation for each statement in the survey is presented in Table 3. A low mean value for a question indicates that administrators perceive that specific activity to be occurring, whereas a high score shows an absence of such activity.

Place Table 3 about here

Articulation activities which appear to be fairly prevalent throughout the state are the existence of programs which allow high school students to visit classes at the community colleges (items 4a and 4b), the existence of policies clearly indicating differences between high school level and college level classes (item 6a), and the use of college faculty members as guest lecturers,

consultants, as well as resource persons at the high school (item 8). The use of high school faculty members in these capacities, however, was not very prevalent (item 7). Most administrators agreed that articulation activities between high schools and community colleges should be encouraged to a greater extent (item 18), that statewide meetings or regional meetings of administrators were not being held to any great degree (item 2a), and that there is a greater likelihood for these meetings to be held when they are related to vocational education subject areas (item 2b).

There was agreement that the high schools are doing a good job in providing the type of preparation needed by a student to succeed in the community college in general education subject areas and in vocational education subject areas (items 10a and 10b). Even though most administrators tended to agree with this statement, some animosity continues to exist between some administrators in the two types of institutions as evidenced by some of the comments received to the open ended question (item 19). Other findings showed that there was general agreement that: (a) articulation between high schools and community colleges benefits both institutions, (b) regular articulation conferences which would bring together interested parties to consider common problems and

potentials of articulation are a good ideas, and (c) representatives from the community college do not visit classes in the high schools much to observe instruction and assess the implications of the offerings for programs at the college with respect to general education subject areas (item 3a). There was, however, a slightly greater tendency for this type of articulation to occur in vocational education subject areas (item 3b). Comments indicated that visits to the high schools were more often made for the purpose of recruitment rather than for curricular articulation and that faculty from both types of institutions do not participate in joint faculty workshops for staff development (item 9). Results also revealed that faculty have not been regularly involved in discussions regarding the development of a general education program which is well articulated between the last two years of high school and the two years of community college (item 11).

Finally, there was a greater tendency for the community college to make its facilities available for the high school than for the high school to make its facilities available to the college (items 13a, 13b, 13c, 14a, 14b, and 14c).

Table 4 contains the three dependent variables measured by the instrument, the scales for status of

articulation, desirability of articulation, and status of articulation with respect to general education. These measures were broken down relative to the independent categories of institution type, geographical location within the state, size of the community college, and residence status.

Place Table 4 about here

The Pearson relationship between each dependent variable and each predictor or independent variable is presented in Table 5. Although none of the correlations was high, the strongest relationships existed between each dependent variable and the type of institution. Those administrators who perceived the presence of more articulation activities tended to be from the colleges.

Place Table 5 about here

Results of the multiple regression analyses are displayed in Table 6. There were no significant interactions between type of institution and any of the other independent variables, location of the colleges, size of the college, or residence status. There were significant independent differences between the mean

perceptions of high school principals and community college administrators with regard to status of articulation when tested in the presence of geographic location of college and size of college. When the subscale, status of articulation with respect to general education curricular areas was analyzed, administrators' responses from the two types of institutions also showed significant mean differences. These results in conjunction with those in Tables 4 and 5 show that community college administrators perceive articulation, generally, to be occurring to a greater extent than do high school administrators.

Place Table 6 about here

The dependent variable, desirability of articulation, also showed significant mean differences between high school principals and community college administrators. Tables 4 and 5 indicate that community college administrators perceive the desirability of articulation more positively than do high school administrators.

Summary

Survey responses of 58 community college and 83 high school administrators to a Likert type instrument were analyzed. Dependent measures of status of articulation,

desirability of articulation, and status of articulation with respect to general education curricular areas were analyzed for significant differences according to type of school, geographic location of school, size of community college, and residence status.

Results showed that community college administrators perceived articulation to be occurring to a significantly greater extent than their colleagues in the high schools. Community college administrators also perceived the desirability of articulation in a significantly more positive vein than did the high school principals.

Administrators from both types of institutions perceive that articulation is not occurring to the extent that it ought to be occurring. The overall mean value for the status of articulation was 3.1 while the overall mean value for the desirability of articulation was 1.5. This finding is consistent with the research of Tom [5] who states that "everyone favors articulation, few practice it, and hardly anyone realistically describes the result" (p. 7).

Potential for increased articulation in the form of more frequent use of high school faculty members as guest professionals in the community colleges, more statewide or regional meetings to discuss articulation between high school and community college programs, more visits of

representatives of the community college to observe instruction as well as assess the implications of the high school offerings for programs at the college, and increased joint workshops between faculty of the two types of institutions.

With a general positive climate regarding the articulation process, efforts should be undertaken at the state level as well as the local level to encourage the various units within the educational system to work together so that the maximum benefit can be attained from the educational process through articulation.

References

1. Cross, Patricia. "The Adventures of Education in Wonderland: Implementing Education Reform." Phi Delta Kappan 68 (1987): 496-502.

2. The National Commission on Excellence in Education. A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform (United States Department of Education). (Order No. 065-00-00177-2). Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1983.

3. Kintzer, Frederick. Nationwide Pilot Study on Articulation--Topical Paper No. 15. Los Angeles: ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges, University of California, 1970.

4. Edwards, George; Leonard, Rex; & Southerland, Arthur. Measuring Articulation. Unpublished manuscript, 1988.

5. Tom, Alan. "Three Dilemmas: School-University Ventures." The Clearing House 48 (1973): 7-10.

Table 1

Articulation Questionnaire

SCALE:

1. I agree with the statement.
2. I tend to agree with the statement.
3. I have no feeling one way or another.
4. I tend to disagree with the statement.
5. I disagree with the statement.

1. Planned meetings with administrators from high schools and junior colleges are held in our district to discuss cooperation in:	
a) general education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
b) vocational education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Statewide or regional meetings of administrators are held to discuss matters pertinent to articulation between programs at the high school and junior college as they relate to:	
a) general education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
b) vocational education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Representatives from the junior college visit classes at the high school in my district to observe instruction and assess the implications of the high school offerings for programs at the college with respect to:	
a) general education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
b) vocational education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Programs exist that allow high school students to visit classes at the junior college and receive orientation on the available opportunities for study at the college as it relates to:	
a) general education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5
b) vocational education subject areas.	1 2 3 4 5

5. Some high schools in my district offer courses that are accepted for credit or advanced placement by the junior college in:

   a) general education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5
   b) vocational education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Policies exist that clearly indicate the differences between high school level and college level classes as they relate to:

   a) general education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5
   b) vocational education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5

7. High school faculty members are used as guest lecturers, consultants, and resource persons at the junior college. 1 2 3 4 5

8. Junior college faculty members are used as guest lecturers, consultants, and resource persons at the high school. 1 2 3 4 5

9. High school faculty and junior college faculty participate in joint faculty workshops for purposes of staff development in my service area. 1 2 3 4 5

10. The high schools are doing a good job in providing the type of preparation needed by a student to succeed in the junior college in:

    a) general education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5
    b) vocational education subject areas. 1 2 3 4 5

11. The junior college and the high school have been involved in discussions regarding the development of a general education program which is well articulated between the last two years of high school and the two years of the junior college. 1 2 3 4 5

12. The junior college and the high school have been involved in discussions regarding the development of a four-year vocational program which would include basic preparation in the last two years of high school and specialized work continued at the junior college. 1 2 3 4 5

13. The physical facilities of the high schools are frequently made available to the junior colleges for:

a) classrooms.	1 2 3 4 5
b) libraries.	1 2 3 4 5
c) athletic events.	1 2 3 4 5

14. The physical facilities of the junior college are frequently made available to the high schools for:

a) classrooms.	1 2 3 4 5
b) libraries.	1 2 3 4 5
c) athletic events	1 2 3 4 5

15. Advanced high school students in my area are frequently encouraged to begin their college work while still in high school by enrolling in junior college classes. 1 2 3 4 5

16. Articulation between high schools and junior colleges benefits both institutions. 1 2 3 4 5

17. Regular articulation conferences which would bring together interested parties to consider common problems and potentials with regard to program articulation are a good idea. 1 2 3 4 5

18. Articulation activities between high schools and junior colleges should be encouraged to a greater degree. 1 2 3 4 5

19. Please use the following space to address any articulation activities that are occurring in your district that were not so specifically mentioned in this opinionnaire. Also, please describe any articulation activities between high schools and junior colleges that you feel should be occurring.

*Response numbers used in the statistical analysis.

Table 2

Breakdown of Respondents by Independent Variables

Type of Institution	Number	Percentage
Junior College	37	30.8
High School	83	69.2
Total	120	100.0
Geographical Location		
North	51	42.5
South	69	57.5
Total	120	100.0
Size of Community College*		
Large	80	66.7
Small	40	33.3
Total	120	100.0
Residential Status*		
Dorms	100	83.3
No Dorms	20	16.7
Total	120	100.0

*For the independent variables labeled "size" and "residential status" the data relate to the junior college. for the purposes of this study, high schools located in a specific junior college district were considered to be feeder schools to that junior college.

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation by Individual Question (Total Population

Question #	Mean	Standard Dev.
1A	3.1	1.7
1B	2.8	1.7
2A	3.6	1.4
2B	3.3	1.5
3A	4.0	1.4
3B	3.7	1.5
4A	2.2	1.4
4B	2.1	1.4
5A	2.7	1.7
5B	3.4	1.6
6A	2.5	1.6
6B	2.8	1.6
7	3.8	1.5
8	2.4	1.4
9	3.7	1.6
10A	1.9	1.1
10B	1.9	1.0
11	3.6	1.4
12	3.3	1.4
13A	3.4	1.6
13B	3.8	1.3

Table 3--Continued

Question #	Mean	Standard Dev.
13C	3.8	1.3
14A	3.4	1.5
14B	2.8	1.6
14C	2.6	1.6
15	2.8	1.6
16	1.6	1.0
17	1.5	0.9
18	1.5	0.9

N=120

Scale: 1 = Agree

2 = Tend to Agree

3 = No opinion

4 = Tend to Disagree

5 = Disagree

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviations of Questionnaire Scales by Categories of Independent Variables

Questionnaire Scales	Independent Variables								
	Type of Institution		Geographical Location		Size of College		Residence Status		
	Community College	High School	North	South	Large	Small	Dorms	No Dorms	Total
Status of Articulation									
Mean	2.5	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.1
Std Dev	0.7	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8
N	47	94	50	69	79	40	99	20	119
Desirability of Articulation									
Mean	1.3	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5
Std Dev	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.9
N	37	83	51	69	80	40	100	20	120

Table 4--Continued

Mean and Standard Deviations of Questionnaire Scales by Categories of Independent Variables

Questionnaire Scales	Independent Variables								
	Type of Institution		Geographical Location		Size of College		Residence Status		
	Community College	High School	North	South	Large	Small	Dorms	No Dorms	Total
Status of Articulation with Respect to General Education									
Mean	2.7	3.8	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0
Std Dev	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	0.7	0.9
N	37	83	51	69	80	40	100	20	120

Table 5

Relationship Between Each Dependent Variable and Each Independent Variable

Dependent Variables	Independent Variables*			
	X1	X2	X3	X4
Status of Articulation	44	-07	05	09
Desirability of Articulation	20	09	05	-03
Status of Articulation with Respect to General Education	22	-10	03	02

*The independent variables and their corresponding abbreviations in the Table are:

Type of Institution = X1

Geographical Location = X2

Size of Junior College = X3

Residential Status = X4

Table 6

Tests for Differences Between Categories of the Independent Variables

Variable	RSQ_F	RSQ_R	Change	F	df	p
Status	.19	0	.19	28.32	1,117	.00*
Type of School		.13	.06	9.43	1,115	.00*
Location		.17	.02	2.37	1,115	.13
Interaction		.17	.02	2.41	1,115	.12
Type of School		.09	.10	13.93	1,115	.00*
Size of College		.19	.00	0.13	1,116	.74
Interaction		.19	.00	0.43	1,115	.51
Type of School		.17	.02	3.23	1,115	.07
Residence Status		.19	.00	0.40	1,115	.53
Interaction		.19	.00	0.16	1,115	.69
Desirability						
Type of School	.04	0	.04	4.74	1,117	.03*

Table 6--Continued

Tests for Differences Between Categories of the Independent Variables

Variable	RSQ_F	RSQ_R	Change	F	df	p
Status (Gen. Ed.)						
Type of School	.05	0	.05	6.17	1,117	.01*

*Significant at .05

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